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cause to which I intended to devote my life shocked me unspcakably. I considered the matter thoroughly, and came to the conclusion that, for his own soul's sake, he should be forced to part with that small part of his gigantic possessions for the good of mankind.

"The way was easy. My uncle had a little boy—four years old—of whom he was said to be extremely fond. The child had never seen me, although I had often called

such a life as his did not need to invent stories of marvelous adventure. This proposition he proceeded to prove by sketching a strangely varied career, with great clearness and exemplary brevity.

"As to the little affair I'm going to tell

"In the name of heaven, I beseeched noisily, 'do not let me drive me to it. With his infernal cunning he was dragging me into a share in our joint enterprise, out of my hands. I had to kill him to save myself from ruin.'

"The back part of my mouth was so dry that it rustled when I tried to speak, and my brain was reeling, but I managed to gather sense enough to take the amazing tip that he had given me, and breath enough to say: 'Sit down, Mr. Stetson, and try to be calm. I will hear your story.'

"The way in which he said this convinced us both. It is no uncommon thing for a man in his position to forget the combination of the safe, and to depend upon a memorandum. We let him sit down to the desk and hunt for the slip of paper.

"Now the queer part of the story is just here. The colored man, the combination perfectly well, and he also knew that he had to give it up eventually. He was only playing for delay. As a matter of fact—of course, entirely unknown to us—he had

"In came the crowd—a lot of jolly fellows—laughing and talking.

"'Friends of mine,' said the colonel, indicating us, and we got up and shook hands all around.

"Well, Col. Bob," said one of the new comers,

"What's that?" asked Gleason, when the Irishman and his equipage had disappeared.

"The biggest thing on earth!" cried Harris. "It's a safe of the regular express."

money from one safe to the other was black and deep for many days, but at last it was elucidated. The safe had been robbed by a dishonest express agent in the depot in New York. Starting to keep his hands clean, he had been told to put it in the other safe, which was being shipped to an express agent in Albany, a friend whom the thief could trust, and with whom he often divided the proceeds of robberies. The scheme would undoubtedly have succeeded but for the strange chance by which the three crooks and the criminal,

imposed upon his simplicity to make him

transact a matter of business. One of

"Then the first thing is the money, the

Gleason was positively dazed by this great news.

(The end)